

REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 26, 2009. Claims 1, 3, 5, 11, 13, 15, 22 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 11, and 22 are in independent form. Claim 21 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 1, 3, 5, 11, 13, 15, and 22 have been amended to define aspects of Applicant's invention more clearly. Favorable consideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1, 3, 5, 13, 15, 21, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0029474 (*Yada*) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0093521 (*Schlonski et al.*), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,711,154 (*O'Neal*). Cancellation of Claim 21 renders its rejection moot. For at least the following reasons, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 11, and 22, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined printing device that communicates over a network. The information processing apparatus includes a holding unit, an obtaining unit, a determination unit, a communication controlling unit, and an updating unit. The holding unit holds device identification information corresponding to the predetermined printing device, where the device identification information includes first device identification information and second device identification information. The obtaining unit obtains accounting information including a number of sheets printed, based on an image forming operation from the predetermined printing device.

Notably, the determination unit compares a combination of a first device identifier and a second device identifier received from the predetermined printing device with the device identification information held by the holding unit, and determines whether at least one of the first device identifier and the second device identifier is being managed. If the determination unit determines that the first device identifier is not being managed and the second device identifier is being managed or that the first device identifier is being managed and the second device identifier is not being managed, the communication controlling unit issues a notification to an external apparatus. The external apparatus receives the notification through a predetermined communications line and also manages information processing apparatuses. If the determination unit determines that neither the first device identifier nor the second device identifier is being managed, the communication controlling unit does not issue the notification to the external apparatus. The updating unit updates the device identification information held by the holding unit in accordance with an update notification received from the external apparatus, where the update notification is for updating a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information. The notification issued by the communication controlling unit includes information indicating that either the first device identifier or the second device identifier is not being managed. If the determination unit determines that the first device identifier is being managed and the second device identifier is not being managed or that the first identifier is not being managed and the second device identifier is being managed, the communication controlling unit restricts notifying the external apparatus of the accounting information obtained from the predetermined printing device by the obtaining unit until the device identification information is updated by the updating unit. The first device identification

information includes internet protocol address information and the second device identification information includes media access control (MAC) address information.

It is noted that the Office Action states:

In reference to an alarm notification to the administrator is restricted; Examiner invites the applicant to bring this language into the claim to expedite prosecution

(see Office Action, page 3). However, as set forth above, Claim 1 already includes a feature of restricting issuance of a notification to an external device,.

By virtue of the operation of the determination unit and the communication controlling unit, the information processing apparatus does not transmit notifications to the external apparatus, if the determination unit determines that neither the first nor the second identification information is being managed. Accordingly, the external apparatus can be simplified, because the external apparatus receives only notifications regarding devices (e.g., printers) that are managed and does not receive notifications regarding other devices (e.g., workstations) that are not being managed, for example.¹

Yada is understood to relate to an asset management system in which information regarding assets is gathered by a software program (see paragraph 1). *Yada* discusses that asset management information can be updated automatically and that an administrator can be required to manually update the asset management information only when an asset is purchased or removed from service (see paragraph 12). *Yada* also discusses that, in Step S8-2, a communication log is analyzed and a determination is made whether a MAC address and an IP

^{1/} Any examples presented herein are intended for illustrative purposes and are not to be construed to limit the scope of the claims.

address are those of an asset being managed (*see* paragraph 62). If these addresses are not of an asset being managed, an alarm notification indicating that the asset should be registered is provided to an administrator, in Step S8-3 (*see* paragraph 62). In Step S8-4, a determination is made as to whether the addresses are of a particular host (*see* paragraph 63). If the addresses are not of the particular host, an alarm notification indicating that contents of a registration have been updated is provided to the administrator, in Step S8-6 (*see* paragraph 63). In Step S8-8, a determination is made as to whether a particular asset is a management target (*see* paragraph 64). If the particular asset is not the management target, an alarm notification indicating that contents of a registration have been updated is provided to the administrator, in Step S8-10 (*see* paragraph 64).

As best understood by Applicant, *Yada* discloses that the only time an alarm notification is not transmitted is when the MAC address and the IP address are those of a management target (and other conditions that are tested in Steps S8-4, S8-8, and S8-11 are met). Accordingly, *Yada* fails to disclose or suggest a determination unit that determines “whether at least one of the first device identifier and the second device identifier is being managed,” and a communication controlling unit configured “not to issue the notification to the external apparatus if said determination unit determines that neither the first device identifier nor the second device identifier is being managed,” as recited in Claim 1. Moreover, *Yada* fails to teach or suggest that an alarm notification to the administrator is restricted, if it is determined that the MAC address and the IP address are not those of an asset being managed.

Schlonski et al. is understood to relate to an asset management system in which information about assets can be gathered and managed (*see* paragraph 2). The Office Action

alleges that *Schlonski et al.* discloses the holding unit and the obtaining unit, which the Office Action concedes are not disclosed or suggested in *Yada*. Nothing has been found in *Schlonski et al.*, however, that is believed to remedy the deficiencies of *Yada* identified above.

O'Neal is understood to relate to a notification system for alerting a user of received messages, regardless of what type of device generated the message (*see* col. 2, lines 29-32). The Office Action alleges that *O'Neal* discloses filtering messages based on distinguishing device types and user defined roles. Nothing has been found in *O'Neal* that is believed to remedy the deficiencies of *Yada* and *Schlonski et al.* identified above.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over *Yada*, *Schlonski et al.*, and *O'Neal*, whether considered separately or in combination, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

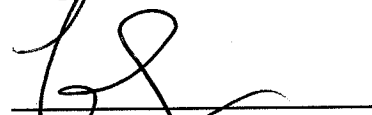
Independent Claims 11 and 22 include features similar in many relevant respects to those of Claim 1 and are believed to be patentable over *Yada*, *Schlonski et al.*, and *O'Neal*, whether considered separately or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above. The other rejected claims in the present application depend from one or another of Claims 1, 11, and 22 and are submitted to be patentable over *Yada*, *Schlonski et al.*, and *O'Neal*, whether considered separately or in combination, for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No petition to extend the time for responding to the Office Action is deemed necessary for this Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite petition fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and an early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank A. DeLucia', is written over a horizontal line.

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